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LIBERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

An Address Delivered at Hinesville, July 4, 1876

By JOHN B. MALLARD

When the sun went down on the night of the 18th of April, 1775, England and her American Colonies, exasperated as they were, might still, by a generous regard on the part of the former to the rights of the latter, have remained together in the bonds of union.

When the stars vanished on the morning of the 19th, bands of iron could not have held them together. The pale moon, as she rose on the night of the 18th, witnessed the embarkation of a detachment of the army of General Gage. The first beams of the rising sun of the 19th fell upon a spot of ground, red with the blood of murdered heroes.

Distress and sorrow had gathered over the inhabitants of a peaceful town. On her green sward lay, in death, her old men, and her young men, crying to God for vengeance from the ground.

No independence had been proclaimed; no war had been declared; but duty and self preservation exist from eternity, and have been recognized, in all their binding force, from the morning of creation. The humble yeomanry of Lexington acted in defense of their rights, and the God of Justice and of battles was with them. No telegraphic wires were then in operation; but on swift relay of horses tidings that blood had

been shed were transmitted from town to town—from province to province—over hills and lakes and bays and rivers—through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and Virginia and Southward it sped, through pines and palmettoes and moss-covered oaks, till it resounded amongst the swamps of Midway and along the banks of the Altamaha. With one impulse the colonies sprang to arms—with one spirit they pledged themselves to defend the common cause. And one hundred years ago this day thirteen colonies, declaring that the King of Great Britain had erected a multitude of officers amongst them; that he had sent thither swarms of officers to harass the people and eat out their substance; that he affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power; that he combined with others, for suspending the legislatures and declared themselves invested with power to legislate in their stead; solemnly seceded from the crown of England, and declared themselves an independent nation.

“Our fathers signed the bold decree
That said our native land is free,
Then thousands echoed back the strain
From hill and valley, moor and plain,
Then up our Country’s banner rose,
In proud defiance of her foes.
Then gathered there that gallant band
To guard with love their fatherland,
Then came the young, the aged, all
For it to stand, for it to fall,
And this the watchword of the free,
Our God, our home, our Liberty.”

In that terrible struggle that ensued between numbers and fewness, wealth and poverty, might and right, I need not stop to tell you what part those took who lived then where we now live. Who has not heard of the noble resolves and patriotic deeds of the inhabitants of St. John’s Parish? Who has not heard of Lyman Hall, who affixed his name to the Declaration of Independence? Who has not heard of Gen. James Screven,

Rev. Moses Allen and Col. John Baker and Major John Jones, and a host of other fearless spirits who repaired to their Country's standard, resolved "to do or die," and fell nobly fighting for home and liberty?

"Beneath the sods their ashes lie—yet
Seek the spot; no trace the eye can see;
No grave stone; but they need it not;
They left their Country free."

A short historical sketch of those early settlers of a county that has given to the world such noble men as these is the theme assigned for my address on this occasion.

The Colony of Georgia was founded by James Edward Oglethorpe in February, 1733; and the first settlement made was on the right bank of the Savannah river, about 17 miles from its mouth.

The first scheme of government instituted by the trustees for the colony was of the simplest kind, consisting of three bailiffs, a recorder, two constables, two tithing-men and eight conservators of the peace. This plan of government having failed, the trustees determined to remodel it, and instead of a bailiff's magistracy, they established a constitution to be administered by a president and several assistants. Still the colonists labored under many grievances, and petitioned for redress. But the trustees, wedded to a system that was beautiful in theory, held back for a time the helping hand. At length, warned by the impoverished condition of the Province, they revoked several of their early laws relating to the tenure of lands, and other oppressive burdens. William De Brahm, having received the appointment of provincial surveyor, was sent into the Province, and proceeded immediately to explore its eastern portions, and to make surveys and draughts of the indentations of the coast, and of the streams and rivers running into the ocean.

On the surrender of the trustees' charter to the king, the government of the colony came under the control of a Board of Trades and Plantations. The prospective success of the

colony under this change of rulers, and a better knowledge of the rich lands of the inland swamps, brought more fully to light by the topographical surveys of the Provincial Surveyor, induced numbers from Carolina and other more northern colonies and from the old world to remove into the province. As early as 1748, grants of land were made to Captain Mark Carr, Colonel Heron, Griffith Williams Middleton Evans, Lieutenant Dow, Charles West and others. Carr's land was situated on Midway river. Heron's was on an island near its mouth, called at one time Bermuda, then Heron, and now Colonel's Island. These tracts of land were near the sea shore and on both sides of the Midway river.

Previous to the issuing of these grants, a company of Scotch Highlanders had settled on the banks of the Altamaha; and called their settlement New Inverness, now Darien.

For the convenience of these different settlements, as well as the town of Savannah, Oglethorpe ordered Augustine and Tolme, two engineers, to survey the country from Savannah to New Inverness to know where a road might be most conveniently made, and these engineers reported that they had found the country passable for horses, and a road could be laid out so as to make it but 70 miles; and a few years after this survey John Harn, Charles West and Audley Maxwell were appointed to open a road from the south side of Ogeechee river to the head of Midway whence, it was said, it would be easy to make a road to the Altamaha. Of these three road commissioners, Audley Maxwell was a conservator of the peace, and had settled a place on Midway river called Limerick.

When subsequently the Province was organized into twelve districts, and a Colonial Assembly was called, consisting of sixteen members, proportioned according to the population of the different districts, the territory extending from Mount Hope on the north to Bulltown Swamp on the south, was called Midway District, and was represented by Audley Maxwell in the Colonial Assembly. This District was called Midway from its supposed equal distance from the rivers Ogeechee and

Altamaha. The excellent character of the lands of this District attracted the attention of a company of persons who had emigrated from Dorchester, New England, and had settled on the northeast bank of Ashley river, about 18 miles from Charleston, South Carolina. In 1752 these Dorchester emigrants proposed a settlement in Georgia, and sent thither three persons to view the lands. On the 16th of May of that year they arrived at Midway. Passing through Savannah they had an interview with the Colonial Surveyor, who informed them of the rich lands lying on the Midway and Newport rivers, and advised them to settle there; and having obtained from the Council of Georgia a grant of 31,950 acres of land in a body, they returned to Carolina and made their report.

On the 6th of December following Mr. Benjamin Baker and family, and Mr. Samuel Bacon and family arrived at Midway and began to settle. They landed first at Mr. Maxwell's and having obtained hatchets they cut their way through vast cane brakes to the knoll on which Midway Church now stands. Soon after Parmenus Way, William Baker, John Elliott, John Winn, Edward Sumner, John Quartermann, and others, arrived and began to settle.

Finding a general disposition in the people to remove, the Rev. John Osgood (their minister) went into the new settlement in March, 1754, and gradually the whole church and society collected and settled there, and became, and remained for 50 or 60 years, the religious element of the District. Of those who had preceded these Carolina emigrants some were Presbyterians, some Scotch-Irish, some Huguenots. Not all who came from South Carolina were originally from New England. Some of the families resident among and around them, who had become connected with them in business and other relations of life, came with them to Georgia, and became identified with them in their ideas, customs and manners. Isaac Girardeau and Richard Girardeau were Huguenots. Of the 42 persons coming into the District from 1752 to 1772 one was from Charleston, 4 from Pon Pon, and 37 from Dor-

chester and Beech Hill. The names of Baker and Sumner and Way are probably of English origin. These settlers associated very little at first with those in the District who had preceded them. They had all the elements of an independent community. They brought their trades with them; some were saddlers, some were tailors, some were carpenters, but a majority were tillers of the soil. Indigo was made to some extent; but the principal object of cultivation was rice. Then houses for the most part were builded on knolls nearest the rice fields. Their houses were as a general thing one story, parlor and chamber, open front piazza, two shed rooms in back piazza, one or two small rooms upstairs under the roof, batten windows and doors, no sashes, clay chimneys, framed and weather boarded, or puncheoned and clayed inside and out. Very little, if any, mahogany furniture. No four wheel carriages. Both sexes went to church and elsewhere on horseback. Afterwards two-wheel stick back chairs were used. If a lady or two ladies rode in the chair, a servant man would ride along the side of the horse in the shaft, with the check rein in his hand. If a gentleman rode with the lady in the chair the servant man would ride on horseback before, or follow, according to fancy. The first four-wheel vehicle for family use that was ever seen at Midway Church was, it is said, owned by Joseph Quarterman, father of Col. Joseph Quarterman, and was painted sky blue.

The District resembled in its physical features and in its climatic and miasmatic characters the country they had left in Carolina—low swamps, and abounding in ponds. Bilious fevers prevailed in summer and pleurisies in winter. For a period of twenty years succeeding the first settlement there were 193 births and 134 deaths. When compared with the number in the church and society, this shows a mortality very large. The greater number of deaths occurred in September, October and November. April, May, June, July and August were the healthiest months, and June healthiest of all.

The character and numbers of these Midway settlers will appear from the following letter written from Savannah,

August 7th, 1752, by the Hon. James Habersham, Secretary of the Colony of Georgia under Gov. Reynolds, to the Hon Benjamin Martyn, Agent for the Province:

"Sir, in the President and Assistants' letter to you of the 28th ultimo, they mentioned that five persons, deputed by 43 families—part of a congregation of protestant dissenters, with their minister in the neighboring Province, had applied for lands to settle here, which was granted; and that it was expected, on their determining to remove, that several more of their brethren would want to join them. Accordingly 28 persons, by their deputies, petitioned the Board yesterday (August 6th, 1752) for lands, and received a satisfactory answer. These 28, with their families, consist of 77 whites and 158 blacks, which, with the former 43 families, make 280 whites, men, women and children and 536 blacks. Part of the first petitioners have gone to have their lands laid out and make the necessary preparations for the rest to follow. These people, with their minister, are not unknown to many in this colony; and we have had an extraordinary character of them from all quarters, which I believe they will justly deserve. They will all be settled as contiguous as possible for the convenience of meeting together in public worship, which they say is a principal object of their removing; for where they formerly resided, many of them were very much pinched for land, and some rented what they occupied, which was very discouraging, and would have obliged them to separate. To prevent this, those who were well accommodated in respect to land proposed to dispose of them and remove with those who wanted.

"They will be settled on the heads of Midway and Newport rivers, about 30 or 40 miles from this town, which will greatly strengthen together these parts. I really look upon these people moving here to be one of the most providential circumstances that could befall the colony. They are all inured to the climate; know how to begin new settlements to the best

advantage; and will be an immediate benefit to the Province by increasing her products, without one farthing's expense to the public."

The church and the school house are the glory of any people. Wherever the true lover of humanity goes, he carries with him the Bible in one hand and the spelling book in the other.

Though pressed by cares, incidental to the forming of a new settlement, surveys to make, lands to open, houses to build, the pious emigrants from Carolina found time to sing the songs of Zion in a strange land. Morning and evening their orisons arose like incense to the God of Heaven. The first building erected in Liberty County, for religious worship, was in 1756, on the north side of the north branch of Newport Swamp, and the first sermon preached in it was on the 2nd of January of the following year. This building was 44 by 36 feet, with a gallery 18 feet in story, pitched roof, hipped at one end, and a small steeple at the other. This house was destroyed by fire in 1778 by a body of armed men under the command of Colonel Prevost in the British service. At the close of the Revolutionary War, a coarse building was put up, near the site of the first meeting house, 40 by 30 feet, with "posts in the ground and the sides filled up with poles." This gave place to another erected on the same spot in 1792, 60 by 40 feet, with a large and commodious gallery.

This church was of the Congregational order, and its members were moderate Calvinists, and receivers of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Six or seven years after the Midway settlement was begun, Mark Carr, who owned a high sandy and dry tract of land on Midway river, laid off the same into a town, dividing it into streets, lanes and commons. This tract he deeded in trust to James Maxwell, Kenneth Baillie, John Elliott and John Stevens. The town was called Sunbury. It soon rose in commercial importance.

A number of the Midway and Newport planters made it their residence during the Summer and Autumnal months. Immigrants came to it from different quarters, particularly from the island of Bermuda. Large quantities of lumber were shipped from it and from Colonel's Island to the West Indies and other foreign ports; and it was, at one time, contemplated to unite Midway and Newport rivers by means of a canal passing between Colonel's Island and the main land, for the purpose of flattening rice from the Newport plantations to Sunbury. For a number of years it was the mart for trade. The old Sunbury road, cut into the interior of Georgia, and over which large quantities of produce were carried to its wharves, is still in existence, an evidence of what Sunbury once was. Governor Wright, in a letter to Lord Halifax, dated 1763 uses these words in reference to Sunbury: "I judged it necessary for his Majesty's service that Sunbury, a well settled place having an exceedingly good harbor and inlet from the sea, should be made a port of entry; and have appointed Thomas Carr collector and John Martin naval officer for the same. There are 80 dwelling houses in the place. There are considerable merchant stores for supplying the town and the planters in the neighborhood with all kind of necessary goods; and around it, for about 15 miles, is one of the best settled parts of the country."

About 1763 or 1765 a branch of Midway Church was organized in Sunbury and Rev. James Edmunds was engaged to supply its pulpit, and Captain Peacock was chosen deacon. The pulpit of this church was subsequently filled by the Rev. Mr. Hitchcock and the Rev. William McWhir. Subsequently another church was gathered in Sunbury, and another building erected, under the auspices of the Baptist denomination.

In 1802 Rev. C. O. Screven, who was born at Screven Hill, St. John's Parish, in 1773, and was graduated at Brown University, was settled over this church; and, after a useful life and successful ministry, died in the city of New York, in the year 1830, and was succeeded in his pastoral charge by the Rev. Samuel Spry Law.

In 1818 a second Baptist Church was constituted not far from Riceboro, and the Rev. Thomas Sumner Winn was installed its first pastor. Mr. Winn's connection with this church was of short duration. Little did his friends, who loved him so tenderly, and who were so tenderly beloved by him, little did they think, when they settled him as pastor, how soon they would be called to feel the pang of separation; how little did those who had listened to him with so much profit, imagine how soon they would lose the benefit of his instruction and his example. But such was the appointment of Heaven. He was destined to run a short race, he soon reached the goal, but the church lost a faithful, zealous, persevering and devoted minister.

Mr. Winn was succeeded in the pastoral charge by the following ministers, in the order in which they stand: Rev. Henry J. Ripley, D. D., Rev. S. S. Law, and Rev. Josiah Law, Rev. Augustus Bacon, Rev. Thomas Curtis, Rev. Mr. Stevens, and Rev. Josiah S. Law.

In the meantime the swamps of Newport river had been explored. Settlements farther west began to increase in number, and it was found inconvenient to transport to Sunbury so bulky and heavy an article as rice. Newport river being found navigable for sloops, it was determined to bridge it near its source, to prepare a landing, and ship directly to Savannah. Hence arose what was called the "Bridge War"—Sunbury against the Bridge, and the Bridge against Sunbury. Hostile feelings were excited, angry words were spoken, paper bullets were shot, but westward "the march of empire took its way." Rice would be carried to the Bridge, and the Bridge became Riceboro.

Riceboro was settled about the commencement of, or a little before, the Revolutionary War. It did not, however, rise into any importance till after the war. For a number of years it was the mart of trade for the county—was the place for balls and military parades.

By an Act of the Legislature, passed in 1784, all county elections and courts were to be held at Sunbury; but in 1796 an Act was passed, authorizing the Justices of the Inferior Court to call a meeting of the inhabitants of the county to express, by ballot, their choice of a place for a permanent court ground, and it was decided, by a large majority, that North Newport Bridge was the most eligible place, and, in the following year, Riceboro became the capital of the county, and Thomas Stevens, Daniel Stewart, Peter Winn, Joel Walker, and Henry Wood were made commissioners to superintend the erection there of a court house and jail. The ground on which the court house and jail stood was donated by Matthew McAllister. For a space of 39 years Riceboro continued to be the county site; but in the year 1836, the court house and jail were removed to Zouck's Old Field.

The settlers at Midway were not unmindful of the education of their children. Among the first native Georgians who were graduated at an American college, was the son of John Elliott who came into the colony as early as 1754. The father was a delegate to the Legislature of Georgia under the administration of Governor Reynolds. The son filled with distinction the office of United States Senator. These Carolina immigrants to Georgia were among the first in the Province to patronize collegiate institutions. May their sons be the last to withhold from them the fostering hand. In proportion to its wealth and the number of its inhabitants, it may with truthfulness be said that no county in the State has contributed more liberally to the cause of education than the county of Liberty. It has given two governors to the State; two judges to the Eastern Judiciary Circuit; an able professor to a theological seminary; to the Presbyterian and Baptist and Methodist denominations many of their ablest and most useful ministers. Six of her sons have been elected to chairs of professorship in three of the colleges of Georgia. One has filled the office of United States Senator, and one as foreign minister to the Court of China.

There are no records from which we may learn, with any degree of certainty, the character and location of the schools that existed previous to the Revolutionary War. The writings of Benjamin Andrew, Benjamin Baker, Rev. John Osgood and a few others, that we have examined, in the forms of diaries and letters, show that they were men of deep thought, religious sentiment, and solemnly earnest in all they did or said. They expressed themselves clearly and intelligently. Their hand-writing was open, bold and easily read. They show an acquaintance with the writings of the best authors of their day; and there is every evidence that these men were not ignorant of the rules of grammar, nor the principles of logic.

Such men would undoubtedly throw their influence in favor of schools and education; and the probability is that the schools in the settlement would compare favorably with the schools in any part of the Province. School houses were erected in different parts of the District, for neighborhood accommodation. One at William Girardeau's plantation on the Sunbury road, about one mile southwest from Midway Church. A school was kept by a Mr. McLain, near the junction of the Riceboro and the old Sunbury roads. A Mr. Ward kept a school at Midway Church, and was succeeded by Mr. Nathaniel Baker about the year 1796. There was a school house about two miles from Riceboro on the Darien road; also on Jour-dine's Hill, kept by Mr. Elijah Baker, about the year 1795.

But perhaps the largest and most important school in the District was the one that was incorporated in 1788, and was located at Sunbury and taught by the Rev Mr. Hitchcock. The commissioners, as named in the act of incorporation, were Abiel Holmes, James Dunwody, John Elliott, Gideon Dowse and Peter Winn. That this school was a school of high grade would appear from the following program of the grades of study and rates of tuition, as published in the Georgia Gazette:

Reading, writing and arithmetic----	4 lbs. 13 shillings
Latin and Greek -----	5 lbs. 10 sterling

In 1789 the students of the Academy gave a public exhibition. The introductory prayer was offered by the Rev. Abiel Holmes, after which an ode, composed for the occasion, was sung and a number of dialogues performed. The pupils were examined in spelling, English grammar, geography and in the Latin language. The Judge of the Court, the Assistant Justices, the Commissioners of the Academy, several gentlemen of the bar, together with a numerous collection of ladies and gentlemen from the town and country composed the auditory. In 1793 Mr. Hitchcock was succeeded by Rev. William McWhir, who was born in Ireland in 1759, and received his collegiate education in Belfast, and such was the reputation of his school in Sunbury that students came to it from almost all parts of the State.

About the time of the removal of the court house to Riceboro, the citizens in that neighborhood came together and appointed Jas. Powell, Benjamin Law, Henry Wood, John Stacy, John Warren, Simon Fraser, James Cochrane, Thomas Bradwell, and the Rev. Mr. Cloud, a committee to co-operate with Rev. Cyrus Gildersleeve, Peter Winn, Daniel Stewart and Thomas Stevens, the legally appointed commissioners of a second academy to be established in the county, in devising some suitable plan for the promotion of education; the result of which proceeding was the establishing of an academy one mile north of Riceboro called the Newport Academy.

The Midway and Newport people builded their houses near the swamps. In consequence of this, and the want of knowledge of the diseases of the climate, and of the preventives and remedies to be used, sickness prevailed, and numbers were cut down before they had reached the meridian of life. To escape the fevers of Autumn, recourse was had to a removal from the plantations during the sickly season. This gave rise to Summer retreats.

A number of families removed to Sunbury and Colonel's Island, where, between the pleasures of social intercourse and the sport of angling, they found a pleasant retreat during the

scorching days of August, and the sickening suns of September. Whilst some families sought the seashore as a residence for the summer months, others removed to the banks of the Canouchee, where the excitements of the chase, the winding of the horn, and the full cry of the pack, excited the young and re-kindled the ardor of the old. But the distance of Canouchee from the plantations made it inconvenient to the planters to reside there; and on the old Sunbury road a gravelly spot was selected as a more convenient retreat from the miasma of the swamps. Here Fleming and Winn and Osgood and others made their summer homes. Here a church was erected, a school was built up, and in process of time it received the name of Flemington, in honor of one of its first and most active settlers. About, or perhaps a little prior to, the time of the settlement at Flemington, the rich lands of what is now known as the "Desert" began more particularly to attract the attention of planters, and its dense forests of trees to give place to fields of grain. The sandhills adjoining the head streams of North Newport river offered a convenient retreat to those who planted the swamps of that river. Here Walthour and Bacon, Stewart and Anderson, Hines and Mallard, Lewis and Way, Quarterman and Mell, and others, passed some of them the whole and some a part of the year. Here also a church was builded and an academy incorporated. In the lapse of time, the name Sandhills was merged into that of Walthourville, in honor of Andrew Walthour, who donated to the community a lot of land for educational purposes.

The planters on the head waters of South Newport river sought health and pleasure in the adjoining pine lands, and named their retreat Jonesville, in memory of Samuel Jones, its first settler, who died at an advanced age, having filled the office of deacon in Midway Church for a number of years.

On the removal of the court house from Riceboro to Zouck's Old Field, Charlton Hines, Enoch Daniels and W. E. W. Quarterman were appointed commissioners to superintend the building of the court house and jail. Here they laid

out a town and called it Hinesville in honor of Charlton Hines, who, for a number of years, represented the county in the General Assembly, and whose business activities, unwearied energy and unstinted hospitality were known of all men, and are not yet forgotten. Here Hines and Bacon and Baker and Bradwell and Fraser and others made their homes, and here a church was builded and a school established. The sea coast of the county, from some unknown cause, failing to sustain its character for healthfulness, and the retreats in the pine lands being at too great a distance from the plantations of the planters in the lower parts of the settlements, they selected a site for a retreat a few miles west of Sunbury, and named it Dorchester, where Baker and Busby and Delegal and Winn and Allen and Capt. Mallard and Dr. R. B. King and others removed, and where a church and an academy were soon established.

These retreats, together with the development of the fertility of soil, and healthfulness of climate in the upper parts of the county, and the progressive course of those who had settled along the banks of Taylor's and Jones' creeks, gave an impetus to the cause of education, and the noble praiseworthy rivalry among the different teachers soon placed the schools of the county among the first in the State.

The educational efforts of the citizens of the county were not confined to those of their own color. At the time Dorchester settlement was made on Ashley river, slavery existed in Carolina, and if the immigrants were not slaveholders before they left Massachusetts they became so shortly afterwards.

In erecting the meeting house at the "cross path" care was taken by settlers to provide for the colored persons. The house was provided with galleries in which the negroes sat and enjoyed the same religious instructions that were imparted to the whites.

During the ministry of the Rev. Abiel Holmes, Mingo, a man of color, commenced preaching to the colored people, with the approbation of the church and society. A place was fitted

up for him near the meeting house, called the "Stand," and a platform was raised from which he preached on Sundays, between the morning and afternoon service. He held religious meetings also at a number of the plantations, and was beloved and highly esteemed. With Mingo was associated Jack Saltus, who was bought by Midway Church, in consideration of his piety and services. Jack Saltus was succeeded by Sharper Quarterman (a servant of old Aunt Sally Quarterman), a man of remarkable piety and energy of character. He not only preached at the "Stand" near the church, as his predecessors had done, but he labored with apostolic zeal, more abundantly than them all, at the different plantations. He died in 1833, full of years, universally lamented. His funeral was held on the green in front of Midway Church, by the light of the moon. Hundreds were in attendance. The coffin was opened; the moon shone upon Sharper's face; the people gazed upon it, and lifted up their voices and wept.

During the ministerial services of Rev. Robert Quarterman, in connection with Midway Church, the duty and the best means of adopting some general and systematic plan for instructing the colored people became subjects of conversation with the ministers and members of the different churches. To carry out these views a public meeting was held at Riceboro; and under the auspices of the Rev. C. C. Jones an association was formed, called "An Association for the Religious Instruction of the Negroes." In connection with this association, Rev. (afterwards Doctor) C. C. Jones accepted a commission to preach to the colored people; and the wonderful success of his gratuitous labors in this missionary field is known of all men.

The charred timbers and piles of rubbish had scarcely been removed from their old homes, made desolate during the Revolutionary War, when the inhabitants of the county were called on to build forts and take defensive measures against the hostile invasions of the neighboring Indians. As a measure to oppose these predatory incursions a public meeting was

called in 1788, at which it was resolved to raise a company of light horse for the defense of the county, to consist of a captain, 2 lieutenants, 2 sergeants and 40 privates. Michael Rudolph was chosen Captain. John Whitehead, 1st Lieutenant, and John Croft, 2nd Lieutenant.

Whether this organization of Capt. Rudolph's company is the origin of the Liberty Independence Troop, the records of this corps do not show. They do, however, show that the company was in complete organization in 1794, under the command of Capt. Simon Fraser; and that Capt. Fraser was succeeded successively by Captains J. B. Girardeau, Sam'l S. Law, Joseph Jones, William Maxwell, William Baker, Joseph Law, P. W. Fleming, David Anderson, E. H. Bacon, Cyrus Mallard, Abiel Winn, W. L. Walthour and W. A. Fleming, its present commanding officer.

In battling with the savage foe, Liberty was not unaided. "If Liberty fall Chatham becomes the frontier exposed to all the horrors of an Indian war." Thus reasoned Col. Hammond, as he appealed for volunteers to the Chatham Regiment. "My corps will march at a moment's warning," responded the brave commander of the Chatham Artillery; and before night-fall 30 men, under the command of Lieut. Robertson, with guns on carriages, were on their way to Fort Saunders in Liberty County. The second night after leaving Savannah they encamped at Midway Church, and slept in the meeting house. "The next day," says Mr. Charles Spalding—the youngest member of the corps—"we reached the fort, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. One half of our force scoured the country every day. Our morning and evening guns echoed through the woods. For my own part I never was happier. I was educated in Liberty County. My friends loaded me with kindness. Mr. Cooper sent me brandy and sugar, Capt Whitehead sent me mutton and other things. In our mess we have Isaac Lagardau, the best singer and the best cook in camp."

About the year 1844 a few public spirited men, in the upper parts of the county, agitated the subject of organizing another

company of horse; and their efforts were nobly responded to. A company called the Liberty Guards was speedily formed and properly officered. Enoch Daniels was elected its first Captain. This company is now under the command of Capt. William Hughes.

A third company of horse was organized at the commencement of the late war, under the command of W. G. Thompson, as captain, B. S. Screven and J. E. Way, as lieutenants, and John E. Baker, sergeant.

In the year 1861 a company of Infantry was organized under the command of W. S. Norman, as captain, S. D. Bradwell, W. J. Winn and W. H. Butler, lieutenants, and was called the Liberty Volunteers.

The Altamaha Scouts was organized in 1861, and its first officers were George T. Dunham, captain; A. J. Hughes, James M. Smith and J. M. Johnson lieutenants. These three companies of horse and two companies of infantry responded promptly to the call of the Confederate States, and, with swords unsheathed, and banners flying, hastened to support their cause on the field of battle. Some fell in the bloody conflict, some were made prisoners of war, and few returned to their homes unmaimed or unscarred.

On the 6th of December, 1852, the one hundredth anniversary of the Midway and Newport settlement was celebrated at Midway Church, with becoming festivities. On Sunday, the 5th, a sermon appropriate to the occasion was preached by the Rev. I. S. K. Axson, D. D. On Monday following, at early dawn, the morning gun was heard. A brass band, provided for the occasion, gave charm to the Star Spangled Banner, as it floated from a liberty-pole erected on the green. At 7 o'clock one hundred guns were fired. At 9, hundreds of people began to assemble. At 11 the procession was formed, the Rev. Clergy on the right; the Chatham Artillery, who had generously volunteered their services for the occasion, next; and the citizens on the left. Under the command of Capt.

P. W. Fleming, chief marshal of the day, the procession moved to the church, where, after prayer had been offered by the Rev. T. S. Winn, an address on the history of "The Settlement of Midway and Newport," was delivered by Prof. John B. Mallard.

After the address and the ceremonies of laying the cornerstone of a monument to be erected to commemorate the settlement in 1752, the citizens and invited guests repaired to tables loaded with all that was tempting to the taste.

On Tuesday, the 7th, the morning gun was again fired, the national banner again thrown to the breeze; throngs again hastened to the church; a procession was again formed; an able and eloquent oration was pronounced by the Hon. William Law; and the festivities of the previous day were renewed. Sentiments were expressed in the giving of toasts, and spirited addresses were made by Law, Dunham, Screven, Way, Stevens and others; and throughout the various ceremonies of the occasion there was but one expression of feeling—that of the highest enjoyment and satisfaction.

The upper parts of the county no doubt afford materials for instructive and interesting history; but the efforts of your speaker, made before the war, and particularly within the past few months, to obtain information as to the names and condition of the first settlers on Taylor's and Jones' creek, and in the 1132 and 24th Districts, and the dates of these settlements having in a great measure failed, he regrets that he has not come in possession of materials out of which to weave a historic narrative. Enough, however, is known of these portions of our county to warrant the assertion that they have increased largely in population, wealth, religious and school privileges, and that the marks of improvement, enterprise and thrift are visible on every hand.

There are, in the county, 17 regularly organized churches: 5 Presbyterian, 5 Baptist, 6 Methodist and 1 Congregational. Of the five Presbyterian churches, two are composed of colored

members under the care of Rev. J. T. H. Waite and Rev. Joseph Williams, and are in ecclesiastical connection with the Presbyterian Church North. The other three, Walthourville, Flemington and Dorchester, are under the pastoral charge of the Rev. J. W. Montgomery.

Of the 5 Baptist churches, North Newport, Jones' Creek and Enon are under the ministerial care of the Rev. D. G. Daniels. Taylor's Creek and Elim are in charge of Rev. John G. Norris.

Jones' Creek was constituted in 1810, by Rev. Mr. Westberry, its first pastor, and has a membership of 145.

Rev. John M. Marshall is preacher in charge of the following Methodist Episcopal Churches: Hinesville, Taylor's Creek, Wesley Chapel, Olivet and Trinity. Of these churches Taylor's Creek is the oldest, having been organized about the year 1800, on which occasion, Mr. James Darsey, now living and 99 years of age, was present, and of which church he was a class leader for a number of years; and when the camp ground was laid off, he cut the first pole that was used in the erection of tents.

The Congregational Church in the county is composed of colored persons and is in charge of the Rev. Floyd Snelson.

Of the 45 or 50 ministers of the Gospel, natives of the county, some of whom have spent, and others are now spending, the vigor and strength of their lives in the dispensation of religious truths, there have labored in foreign lands: Edward W. Stevens, 40 years in Burmah, and John W. Quarterman and Richard Q. Way in the Celestial Empire.

PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS IN 1875

Name	Location	No. Pupils
Bradwell Institute*	Hinesville	60
Walthourville	Walthourville	48
Jones' Creek	Jones' Creek	25
Taylor's Creek	Taylor's Creek	59
Tranquil Institute	Flemington	21

*Authorized to confer diplomas.

NUMBER OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

For Whites	20
For Colored	17
Total	37

SCHOLARS ADMITTED

Whites	431
Colored	1,032
Total	1,463
Average Attendance	1,200

The County officers at the present time are John L. Harden, Judge, and T. N. Winn, Solicitor, of the County Court; John B. Mallard, Ordinary; Henry Way, Clerk Superior Court; J. M. Darsey, Sheriff; Seaborn Jones, Tax Receiver; Jesse Brewer, Tax Collector, and William Hughes, County Surveyor; Wm. Darsey, H. C. Parker, John B. Mallard, Jas. M. Smiley and John R. Middleton, Board of Education; John B. Mallard, School Commissioner; N. Brown, I. M. Smith and G. Amason, County Commissioners.

From the foregoing brief history of the first settlers of our county, we may infer that our ancestors were emphatically a religious people; that they were friends and supporters of the cause of education and benevolence; that they were keenly alive to whatever appeared oppressive on the part of rulers; that they were always ready to respond to their country's call. May their descendants follow the example, and illustrate the noble qualities of their noble sires. They breathed the air we now breathe; they drank of the springs from which we now drink; they cultivated the lands we now plant; they passed through trials as great as those through which we have recently passed; they met with losses as heavy as those we have recently suffered; yet they turned not their backs on the land of their birth, nor sought homes far away from the scenes of their childhood.

Let us, then, fellow citizens, rise from the "slough of dispond," take our harps from the willows, and play a livelier strain; and, mid snow and ice, let us bear aloft a banner, with this as our device *Resurgemus*, and time will show that there is "life in the old land yet!"